



Increasing Financial Stability of Individuals and Families

Housing

Shelter is one of our most basic needs. Whether you choose to rent or purchase a home or need housing assistance, there are several considerations for each option.

Many people dream of becoming a homeowner. A home is the most expensive single item most people will ever buy. It is an asset that can appreciate in value and provide the owner with tax benefits. However, the rewards of homeownership come with a number of responsibilities, including:

- Paying property taxes
- Purchasing homeowners insurance
- Paying Homeowners Association Fees (HOA), if applicable
- Paying for utilities such as water, gas, electricity
- Home Repairs

When planning to purchase a home, determine how much you can afford by analyzing debts and income. The monthly payment, which includes principal, interest, taxes and insurance should not exceed 30 percent of gross income. Visit a lender to get a no-cost pre-approval letter for a mortgage loan.

If you are new to the concept of homeownership, homebuyer workshops and housing counseling are available. To find a counselor near you, contact the Department of Housing and Urban Development at 1-800-569-4287 or HUD's website. There are also many resources on the site to assist with buying, maintaining and keeping your home. Affordable apartments and houses are also available through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Section 8 program can provide affordable public housing units or locate apartments in participating venues and may pay a portion of rent with choice vouchers. To apply for housing assistance, visit hud.gov and select your state.

Renting or leasing a house or apartment has its advantages:

- Fixed monthly rental payments which may include water, sewage, trash
- No property taxes
- Maintenance is not the renter's responsibility
- May include amenities such as pools or fitness centers

Once you enter into a lease, you are subject to its terms until the lease is terminated. If you move before the lease ends, you may be responsible for paying rent through the term of the lease or until the landlord finds a new tenant to fill the vacancy. Find information regarding tenant rights related to security deposits and eviction notices at rentlaw.com.

Resources:

Financial Coaching Training Central New Mexico Community College/Bank of America

Department of Housing and Urban Development hud.gov